

## BOOK REVIEW

SCOTT CALHOUN. 2012. **The Gardener's Guide to Cactus: The 100 Best Paddles, Barrels, Columns, and Globes.** (ISBN-13: 978-1-609469-200-6, pbk.). Timber Press, Inc., The Haseltine Building, 133 S.W. Second Avenue, Suite 450, Portland, Oregon 97204-3527, U.S.A. (**Orders:** www.timberpress.com, 800-327-5680). \$24.95, 227 pp., color throughout, 8" × 9".

Thinking of going to the Desert Botanical Garden in Phoenix, Arizona? If so, now is the time to read Scott Calhoun's *The Gardener's Guide to Cactus: The 100 Best Paddles, Barrels, Columns, and Globes*. The juxtaposition of Dale Chihuly's innovative glass sculptures with cactus and succulents was a stroke of genius. Likewise is Mr. Calhoun's new cactus guidebook.

Succulent plant expert Scott Calhoun has selected 100 of the best cactus available and shows how they can make striking additions to desert gardens or serve as dazzling container specimens. His writing style is one which offers a clean, helpful, well-presented text with reliable design suggestions.

Mr. Calhoun's stunning photograph on the book cover clearly demonstrates to the book publishing world and its gardening readership how easily cactus appreciation can be for everyone—not just specialists. He is the quintessential model of cactus authorship. It is a great book for beginners and expert gardeners.

Paddles, barrels, columns, and globes add new meaning to the cactus gardening neophyte! One look at the Tuna Colorado cactus in its purple high-winter coloration photograph at the Desert Botanical Garden surrounded by a purple Chihuly glass sculpture suggests Mr. Calhoun's new book is set apart from normal cactus guidebooks. First of all, it is a total delight to look at!

As an effort to simplify the issues related to plurals, Mr. Calhoun has chosen to call the plants cactus. He describes cactus conservation and defines Crassulacean Acid Metabolism (CAM). A glance at the Introduction and Table of Contents describes planting and care, cactus planted in the ground and containers, tools of the prickly trade, and the art of showing cactus. Mr. Calhoun not only describes how one plants and cares for cactus; he gives tips for staging cactus at shows sponsored by the Cactus and Succulent Society of America (CSSA). The 100 plants are grouped as follows: low and mounding, barrels and globes, paddles and rods, and columns. Each entry has a colorful photograph, scientific and common names, habitat, mature size, hardiness, flowering season, cultivation, design suggestions, and, yes, culinary value!

In addition, the book has extensive cross-referenced index, bibliography, plant hardiness tables, cactus pests, cactus for special purposes, and selected cactus nurseries. One can tell after reading *The Gardener's Guide to Cactus: The 100 Best Paddles, Barrels, Columns, and Globes*, cactus sagacity can be great fun and rewarding.

When is your first CSSA entry to demonstrate what you have learned from Mr. Calhoun?—Kay M. Stansbery, Ph.D., Library Volunteer, Botanical Research Institute of Texas, 1700 University Dr., Fort Worth, Texas 76107-3400, U.S.A.